

# Cypress Island NRCA Trail System

Scale: 1 inch on the map represents 1/2 mile on the ground

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Map produced in 2004 by Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Engineering Division, Resource Mapping Cartography.

Map information was compiled from DNR Geographic Information System, Natural Areas Program, Northwest Region and other available sources. Latitude and longitude coordinates are based on North American Datum 1983 and obtained from ground survey with resource grade GPS units.

**Note to Map Users:** Extreme care was used during the compilation of this map to ensure accuracy. However, due to changes in ownership and the need to rely on outside information, the Department of Natural Resources cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Therefore, there are no warranties to accompany this material.



## Public Land

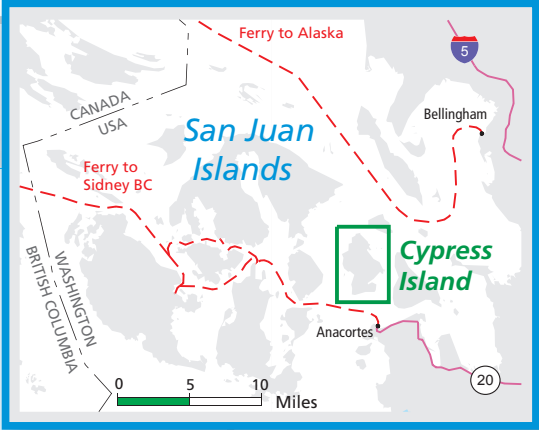
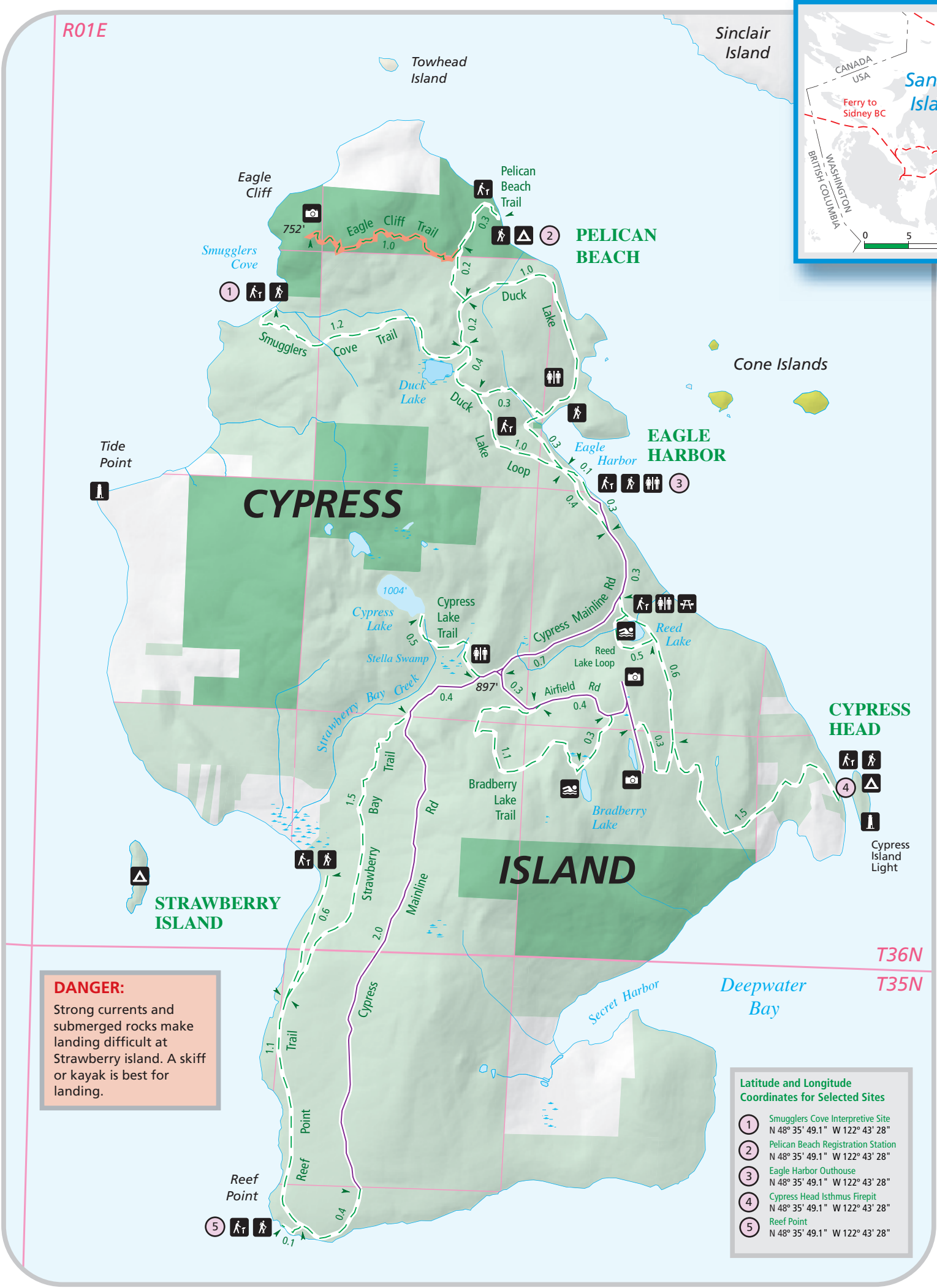
- DNR Natural Resources Conservation Area
- DNR Natural Area Preserve
- Washington State Parks: Cone Islands (Undeveloped)
- Private Property (No public access)

## Trail Systems - Hiking Only

- Trail closed February 1 through July 15 to protect threatened, endangered and sensitive species.
- Trail open all year.
- Trail open all year, follows existing road.
- Mileage
- Elevation in feet

## Recreation Sites

- Trail Access
- Campground
- Toilet
- Picnic Table
- Interpretive Sign
- Viewpoint
- Swimming Lake
- Light Beacon



## Please Help Protect Cypress Island

- Protect natural features by not touching or removing plants, animals, or historic artifacts.
- Hiking only; stay on marked trails. Respect closures and private property.
- Pets must be leashed and are not allowed on Cypress Lake or Eagle Cliff Trails.
- Observe wildlife without interrupting their activities.

## In The Campgrounds

- No reservations. Expect crowds. Plan ahead for alternative destinations.
- Camp only at Pelican Beach, Cypress Head, or Strawberry Island.
- Use designated campsites. Campsite resources are limited; share with others.
- Prevent wildfires. Build your fire in steel fireplaces only.
- Secure food supplies; protect wildlife from human food sources.
- Bring wood, or collect loose sticks and branches. Leave dead trees as habitat.
- No available drinking water. Please bring your own.
- Pack it in. Pack it out. Leave no trace of your visit.
- Limit your stay to 7 days.

## Recreation

Three camping areas totaling 15 acres are managed for primitive camping. Approximately 20 miles of trails & converted roads are open for hiking. Bicycles, pack animals, and all motorized and non-motorized vehicles are not allowed.

Recreation Area	Campsites	Picnic Sites	Toilets	Drinking Water	Mooring Buoys
Pelican Beach	3* 7 total	3* **	yes*	none	6
Cypress Head	10	**	yes	none	3
Strawberry Island	3	**	yes	none	3

At Pelican Beach there are three campsites, three day use sites and one toilet located off a barrier-free boardwalk. Levels of accessibility vary and assistance may be required. Contact DNR region office for details on beach access.

\*\* Picnic tables in campsites only.



## Cypress Island Natural Areas

### Natural Resources Conservation Areas

Natural Resources Conservation Areas are lands identified as having high priority for the conservation of natural systems, wildlife, and recreational values; prime natural features of the Washington landscape, inland or coastal wetlands, significant shores, estuarine, aquatic sites, or important geological features; examples of native ecological communities and environmentally significant sites threatened with conversion to incompatible or ecologically irreversible uses.

### Natural Area Preserves

Natural Area Preserves provide for the protection of natural lands, together with the plants and animals living there in natural ecological systems, which are valuable for the purpose of scientific research and teaching, as habitats of rare and vanishing species, as places of natural, historic, and natural interest and scenic beauty, and as living museums of the original heritage of the state.



Preserving trails depends on all of us

Construction and maintenance of trails on Cypress Island continues with the help of volunteers, including the Student Conservation Association and Pacific Crest Outward Bound School. With increasing use and limited public funding, trails often remain open because of these efforts.

For current information about the island, seasonal restrictions or closures and to learn how you can help protect its resources and recreational opportunities, contact:

Department of Natural Resources  
Northwest Region, Cypress Island Steward  
919 N. Township St.  
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284-9395  
360-856-3500  
Telephone Device for the Deaf 360-856-1371

EMERGENCY phone numbers

- Medical Aid/Sheriff — 911
- Vandalism — 1-800-527-3305
- To report Wildfires — 1-800-562-6010 or 911

This information will be made available in an alternate format. Please call: 360-902-1340 or Telephone Device for the Deaf 360-902-1125



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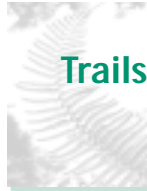
Cypress Island Natural Resources Conservation Area

Cypress Island Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCAs) was established in 1987 as one of the first four public lands protected by the state’s Natural Resources Conservation Act. More than 3,900 acres of Cypress Island and its tidelands now are protected as a conservation area. Low impact public use is allowed in designated areas if it doesn’t negatively affect the area’s protected resources.

Cypress Island Natural Area Preserve

Cypress Island’s more fragile 1,073 acres are managed as a Natural Area Preserve, the highest level of protection for Washington’s natural heritage. These special plant and animal communities contribute to the genetic diversity within the state.

Natural Area Preserves provide living laboratories, and serve as reference points in comparing natural and managed environments. DNR encourages and schedules scientific research and educational visits on these sensitive sites.



Trails

- Pelican Beach** 0.5 mi; 260’ elev gain; Access to Eagle Cliff Trail and Duck Lake Loop. Climbs gradually through dense canopy forest.
- Eagle Cliff** 1mi; 542’ elev gain; Closed Feb 1 - July 15. Only access is from the Pelican Beach Trail. Climbs steeply to the Eagle Cliff summit for sweeping views of other islands and mountain ranges. Trail passes through sensitive forest habitat and grassy bald outcrops. Please stay on trail.
- Duck Lake** 2.1 mi; 295’ elev gain; Follows old logging road from Eagle Harbor to Duck Lake, looping back across slope above the harbor. Duck Lake is an 11-acre wetland, offering bird and wildlife viewing.
- Duck Lake Connector** 0.3 mi; 300’ elev gain; Steep trail connects Eagle Harbor to the upper Duck Lake Loop. Climbs old log skid road over a rocky slope, follows a seasonally wet drainage through a western redcedar stand.

NATURAL AREAS

Cypress Island

2000

trails MAP



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Natural Resources  
Doug Sutherland · Commissioner of Public Lands



Plants reflect island’s diverse conditions

About 90 percent of Cypress Island is a forest dominated by Douglas-fir. Moist north slopes nurture a closed canopy of western redcedar and western hemlock, with an understory of salal, ocean spray, and sword fern. Mixed deciduous forests include Rocky Mountain maple, big leaf maple, and red alder.

Cypress’s geology includes serpentine soils with naturally occurring metals such as nickel, cobalt, and chromium. These conditions are found in the southern two-thirds of the island and may support uniquely adapted plant communities. One of Washington’s only protected, low-elevation serpentine forests is here.

Exposed south-facing slopes host species such as shore pine, Rocky Mountain juniper, Pacific madrone, and Idaho-fescue-dominated grasslands.

Cypress Island and the Natural Areas Program

Cypress Island is a magical place. It is an island of contrasts in lush green forests and barren rocks above the mists and steel blue of northern Puget Sound. It lies within the San Juan Island archipelago, just 4 miles northwest of Anacortes. With booming popularity and population pressures in the area, large undeveloped islands such as Cypress have become rare.

Historically used by First Nations people and later by European settlers, Cypress Island escaped heavy development due to difficult access, rugged terrain, and poor soils for farming. However, over time, people have extensively logged, fished, and sporadically mined for chromite and olivine. Today, more than 5,000 acres of the island’s 5,500 acres are protected. Unique features include a mosaic of recovering high quality lowland forests, lakes, wetlands, grassy-bald ecosystems, cobblestone and sand beaches, and outstanding vistas.

Protecting our unique natural legacy

Cypress Island is part of the Natural Areas Program managed by the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Sites are chosen for their outstanding native ecosystems and their geological and historical resources. DNR maintains and restores the resources on about 86,800 acres in 31 Natural Resource Conservation Areas, and more than 30,800 acres in 49 Natural Area Preserves.

Natural Areas either have been donated or purchased from willing sellers.

Cypress Island is accessible by private boat and is not on an existing ferry route

Animals find refuge at Cypress

The combination of contiguous forests, grasslands, cliffs, talus slopes, and wetlands provide diverse habitats for wildlife. Public participation in keeping disturbances to a minimum will allow the natural processes to continue, and Cypress Island to remain a refuge for wildlife in the future.



Randy Warnock /DNR

On Cypress Island, you may observe blacktail deer, raccoon, red fox, beaver, river otter, banana slugs, garter snakes, rough-skinned newts, and 140 species of birds. Ask for bird and plant checklists from DNR’s Northwest Region.

**Cypress Lake** 0.5 mi; 140’ elev gain; Passes Stella Swamp (aka Homestead Lake). In a steep-sided basin, Cypress Lake is the largest lake on the island (15 acres and 20 feet deep). No swimming or pets in this sensitive watershed.

**Strawberry Bay/Reef Point** From the public access at Strawberry Bay, the **Strawberry Bay Trail** (980’ elev gain) follows an old road south for 0.6 mile. At “Y”, the trail has switchbacks for 1.5 miles to the Cypress Mainline Road or continues south for 1.1 miles on the **Reef Point Trail** (1.7 mi; 440’ elev gain). The 0.1 mile spur to Reef Point, the site of a former olivine mine, is clearly marked. From junction with the Reef Point spur, the trail continues 0.4 mile to connect with the Cypress Mainline Road. Please respect the rights of private communities on Cypress Island and stay on the trails marked on the map.

**Reed Lake Loop** 0.5 mi; no elev gain; Trail circles natural depression transformed into a lake by previous developers. Swimming is allowed. By midsummer, aquatic vegetation dominates this 5-acre lake.

**Note:** mi = mile(s); elev = elevation